

City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
April 16, 2024 ~ 5:00PM
City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska



CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER

Deputy Mayor Igor Zarembo called the meeting to order at 5:09pm.

Council members present: Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Deputy Mayor Igor ZAREMBA, Travis RIESNER, Pamela RAWSON, Mary LEITH

Council members excused: Pete HALLGREN, Mike PRESTEGARD

City staff present: Library Director Tiki Levinson, City Clerk Pat White

Public present: Seven people were in attendance. Live streaming was suspended due to disruptions during the April 2 Council meeting. Attempts to broadcast the meeting over KDHS 95.5 FM radio failed.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Leith moved to approve the April 16, 2024 agenda as presented; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion: Riesner moved to approve the April 2, 2024 minutes as presented; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance.

Mary Leith – Oath of Office

[Mary Leith, former Council members and City Administrator, was appointed to Seat A on April 2.]

Leith read the *Oath of Office* and took her seat at the Council table.

Council Reports (Library, Health & Safety)

Leith said she would gladly take back *Library*.

Riesner said he would report on *Health & Safety*.

COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Lisa Conrad, Kinross Community Relations Coordinator, reported the number of Kinross ore trucks on the road has increased. Roads are dry for easy travel.

REQUEST TO SPEAK - none

CORRESPONDENCE

Community Library Open House, Basket Auction, and Block Party – May 11, 2024, 11:00-4:00

Zarembo reported the Delta Library Association will sponsor the annual fundraiser on May 11 at the library and Community Center. He invited people to participate in games, prizes, music, raffle, and refreshments.

Community Cleanup – May 11, 2024, 9:00-5:00

Zarembo reported Community Cleanup and a barbecue, hosted by the Delta Farm Bureau and The Draft House & Lodge, is scheduled for May 11, 9:00-5:00 (not May 18 as reported on April 2). There will be no charge for yellow-bagged roadside garbage delivered to the dumpsters near the Visitor Center.

Leith said she would vote against the annual 50% discount because she felt the community should concentrate on cleaning roadsides instead of garbage that they saved all winter. She opposed the discount altogether, but most definitely on the same day as Community Cleanup.

Zarembo suggested two cleanup days, one for the community and one for people to clean up their yards.

Musgrove asked to present proposals at the next meeting (May 7).

Motion: Riesner moved to give a 50% discount during Community Cleanup on May 11, 2024; Rawson seconded.

Motion failed on a roll call with two opposed (Leith, Rawson) and three in favor (Riesner, Musgrove, Zarembo).

Musgrove reported Mindy Eggleston, Delta Junction Trails Association, submitted a written request for \$2,000 to use on projects at the Delta River Walk Park and/or the Liewer Community Trails. More information will be presented during the budget cycle.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Pioneer Park Operation and Use Agreement

Musgrove referenced the latest draft of the use agreement with the Pioneers of Alaska, Igloos #35 and #19, and a quit claim deed for the Pioneer Park Pavilion. The City must own it, to insure it. He asked Council to review the use agreement before the May 7 Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation to Library Open House, Basket Auction, and Block Party

Musgrove displayed \$100 gift certificates for landfill services, to be used between May 11, 2024 and June 30, 2025. The certificates cannot be redeemed for cash.

Motion: Leith moved to donate four \$100.00 certificates to the library fundraiser on May 11; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Rawson, Leith, Musgrove, Riesner, Zaremba).

Hire City Administrator

Musgrove reported seven applications were received for the city administrator position. Two more arrived after the closing date. He, Greenleaf, and Council members agreed on two after reviewing the applications. One applicant was unable to start until late May. Lori Later-Roberts was interviewed in person at City Hall last week. Musgrove recommended hiring her as the new City Administrator, effective May 1, 2024.

Motion: Riesner moved to hire Lori Roberts as the new City Administrator; Zaremba seconded.

Discussion followed regarding the city administrator working directly with the mayor.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Musgrove, Riesner, Rawson, Leith, Zaremba).

Musgrove reported the six-month probation period could be extended to one year. All job applications would have sensitive information, i.e., social security and contact, removed before they are made available to the public.

Increase Starting Salary for Equipment Operator

Musgrove reported Bill Bell was the lone applicant for the equipment operator position. Because of his experience, Musgrove asked to offer Bell the “up to five years” award; to start at Grade 6, Step 5 on the wage scale.

Motion: Riesner moved to approve Bill Bell’s starting pay at Grade 6, Step 5 (\$27.97/hour); Leith seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Riesner, Rawson, Leith, Musgrove, Zaremba).

City Purchases over \$1,000

CK #23036 to Aetna - \$13,693.60 for March 2024 group health insurance (check #22997 was approved during March 5 meeting but was voided after it was lost in the mail. CK #23036 was reissued, but omitted from approved checks during April 2 meeting)

CK #23064 to Buffalo Center Service - \$1,805.23 for March fuel at the pump

CK #23065 to GVEA - \$8,995.97 for March electricity

CK #23066 to TNT Enterprize - \$4,000.00 to deliver JD850 dozer from landfill to Airport Equipment Rentals and to deliver JD740 dozer from Airport Equipment Rentals to landfill (outstanding bill from November 11, 2023 - Cell 2 project)

CK #23067 to Vitus - \$6,728.62 for March heating fuel

CK #23068 to Wells Fargo - \$1,860.05 for February credit card charges

Riesner asked for more clarification on transport of dozers (CK #23066).

Motion: Riesner moved to approve #23036 and 23064 through 23068, excluding 23066; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Leith, Musgrove, Riesner, Rawson, Zaremba).

REPORTS

Mayor – JW Musgrove reported the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) report is due by the end of the month. The ARPA file disappeared from the Finance Office, so he is researching documents to create the needed report.

Finance – JW Musgrove reported Kaylee Reiersen distributed the *FY24 Budget versus Actual*, dated April 11.

Library – Mary Leith reported:

- The library has been exceptionally busy the past two weeks because of warm weather, tax season, and library programs. Since April 1, the visitor count has averaged 159/day.
- Delta Elementary teachers are scheduling spring field trips to the library.
- The Library Lions group started seeds to grow plants in planters outside the library this summer.
- The library was closed for inventory on April 11. It was important because of transitioning to the new operating software program in January 2023.

- Donations are slowly arriving for the annual fundraiser on May 11. Registration is open for the Corn Hole Tournament, which is sponsored by The Draft House.

- Holly Stewart will hold two planting classes on April 23. Class size is limited to 12, but they are nearly full.

Health & Safety – Travis Riesner advised people to take precautions from getting the stomach bug that is currently rampant in Delta.

Schools – Pamela Rawson reported:

- The Division of Election is soliciting candidates to run in the upcoming School Board election. There are three three-year seats on the October 1 ballot. Candidacy forms are available at City Hall, Division of Elections offices, or online (www.elections.alaska.gov). The filing deadline is August 2, 2024.

- Elementary School Principal Milt Hooten is concerned about student safety. He is still interested in a crosswalk on Nistler Road. No overpass, just a painted crosswalk with lights.

Musgrove said whose responsibility for that stretch of Nistler needs to be determined. Legal issues and negotiating with the Department of Transportation (DOT) will cost money. He asked that the school district submit a proposal. Leith said DOT believes the City owns the first mile of Nistler (to the 50mph sign near the fairgrounds).

Emergency Services – Pamela Rawson reported there were six ambulance runs since April 1 and no fire tone outs. Musgrove reported Rural Deltana was successful in getting insurance coverage on their buildings and equipment. They are now concentrating on liability insurance to operate a volunteer fire department.

Emergency Preparedness – no report

Park & Recreation – Igor Zaremba reported:

- Ice is gone at the Liewer-Olmstead Ice Arena. Once puddles dry up on the outdoor rink, it will be ready for bicycles, roller blades, and basketballs.

- The 12U girls' hockey team borrowed four players from the 10U to play in the Ponytail League Tournament in Anchorage on April 14. The Delta Huskies 12U girls took second place.

- Most of the snow in the playground area at the park has melted.

- High School softball started today. The ballfields are dry.

Riesner suggested repairing the outdoor rink cracks and indoor upgrades now instead of waiting till next fall.

Landfill – JW Musgrove reported:

- The wind has covered the landfill fence line with plastic bags.

- The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) approved Cell 2 for commercial use.

Airport – JW Musgrove reported Silas Hill has been arranging traffic cones on the airport runway.

At Large – no report

City Administrator / Public Works – JW Musgrove reported in Ken Greenleaf's absence:

- A Fairbanks resident is proposing a 40-acre commercial hemp farm outside of the City limits and beyond the ten-mile radius imposed by the State of Alaska in 2016 (3 AAC 306.250: "if a majority of the voters ... prohibit sale of marijuana and marijuana products or the operation of marijuana establishments or the assembly or city council passes an ordinance to the same effect, the board may not issue, renew, or transfer ... a license for a marijuana establishment with premises located within the boundary of the local government or in the unincorporated area within ten miles of the boundaries of the local government").

- The next Ambulance Service Community Advisory Committee (AS-CAC) meeting is on May 8 at 6:00pm.

Cemetery – Pat White reported one casket burial and six cremation burials are planned this spring.

City Clerk – Pat White reported 27 passport applications were processed in March and 26 so far in April.

Additional Reports – none

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Amber White asked if bringing in subject matter experts was considered to discuss emergency services and how the medical system operates. According to State of Alaska data, there were seven transports in 2009, 40 in 2010, and over 300 in 2023.

Rawson reported Todd McDowell, Office of EMS Manager for Alaska, will be at the May 8 AS-CAC meeting. See *Additional Council Comments* (bottom of page four).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discuss Labor Relations with Attorney

Musgrove read, “It has been brought to my attention, as mayor of Delta Junction, that there is a labor issue concerning wages paid during the excavation at the City landfill last summer, known as Cell 2.” He called for a motion to recess into an executive session in accordance with AS 44.62.310(b) to “... give direction to an attorney or labor negotiator regarding the handling of a specific legal matter or pending labor negotiations.”

Motion: Riesner moved to recess into an executive session to discuss the labor issues; Leith seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Musgrove, Riesner, Rawson, Leith, Zaremba).

Council members JW Musgrove, Pamela Rawson, Igor Zaremba, Travis Riesner, Mary Leith, and City Clerk Pat White excused themselves from the Council Chambers to the City Administrator’s office at approximately 6:30pm. They returned at 7:07pm.

Motion: Leith moved to reconvene the City Council meeting; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Leith reported the Catholic Church might install a 100-foot tower for a radio station on their property near the Rapids/North Clearwater and Deborah Street intersection. She questioned if it would pose a risk to the D66 airport.

Musgrove said he would contact the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Riesner questioned it affecting the north/south ski strip.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:10pm

JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY
SEAL

Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: May 7, 2024